



Corridor
Business
Journal
Cedar Rapids, IA
Circ. 5000
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5/30/2005
44676



¹⁰⁸ Iowa Great Places forum scheduled for Cedar Rapids

One of 10 public forums to discuss the state's new Iowa Great Places initiative will be held from 4 to 6 p.m. June 1 at the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art.

The event is one of several being held around the state to announce and explain the new program. Lt. Gov. Sally Pedersen and Department of Cultural Affairs Director Anita Walker are scheduled to attend.

More than 300 people turned out for the first three forums held as the program launched.

The program was announced in January by Gov. Tom Vilsack, and is designed to streamline government programs by making it easier to connect those with ideas about how to promote the state with agencies and programs that can put those ideas into action.

According to the initiative's web site, Great Places is designed to "make good places great" by bringing together the resources of state government to build capacity in communities, regions or

neighborhoods that cultivate the qualities that make a place special.

Great places, it said, have a "unique sense of place," "an engaging experience," "a rich, diverse social fabric," "a vital, creative economy," among other things.

A total of 18 state agencies will be working with Iowans to stimulate ideas and planning, streamline access to available state resources, help leverage local and private resources and share technical expertise.

Communities, regions and districts hoping to be selected as an Iowa Great Place must submit an application by July 1. Places will be selected by September, and announced at an event in Iowa City in early October. Three places are expected to be selected for the first field.

For more information about the Great Places initiative or to register for the public forum, please visit www.iowagreatplaces.gov.